

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of obtaining a patient record containing information concerning an identified patient from a record custodian company through a record processing center in communication with the record custodian company, ~~and~~ using a record ordering computer server, comprising:

requesting an order, by a requestor, for the patient record concerning the identified patient from the record ordering computer server, including identifying the record processing center holding the patient record and a shipping location to which the patient record is to be delivered, by inputting patient information in a graphical user interface window presented by the record ordering computer server through a web site served by the record ordering computer server;

providing to the requestor, by the record ordering computer server, a single cover letter having a machine readable, bar code identifier and human readable information, identifying the order requested;

providing to the requestor, by the identified patient, a patient authorization letter authorizing release of the patient record concerning the identified patient;

submitting from the requestor to the record processing center a submission including the cover letter along with the patient authorization letter, for completing the order;

reading, using a computer of the record processing center, the machine readable, bar code identifier;

in response to the machine readable, bar code identifier and the patient authorization letter, the record processing center automatically requesting ~~a~~ the record custodian company in possession of the patient record concerning the identified patient to ~~be shipped~~ ship the patient record to the shipping location; and

obtaining, by the requestor, the patient record concerning the identified patient from the shipping location.

2. (Currently amended) A system for obtaining a patient record containing information concerning an identified patient using a computer server connected to an electronic medium, comprising:

a client software module stored in a computer memory of a computer operated by a requestor and by which the requestor requests from the computer server an order for the patient record concerning the identified patient, by inputting patient information in a graphical user interface window presented by ~~from~~ the computer server through a web site served by the computer server;

a software module stored in a computer memory of the computer server which provides to the requestor a single cover letter having a machine readable, bar code identifier and human readable information, identifying the order requested from the computer server and containing shipping and handling instructions;

a communications system through which the requestor submits, absent intervention of an approvals agent, the cover letter along with a patient authorization letter, obtained by the requestor from the identified patient, authorizing release of the patient record, to a processing center; and

a computer based database system operable automatically in response to the submission from the requestor of the cover letter and the patient authorization letter by the processing center, to request shipping the patient record concerning the identified patient to the shipping location.

3. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the record ordering computer server comprises a web site.

4. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the requestor comprises an insurance company.

5. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 further comprising inputting patient information in a graphical user interface window before requesting the order.

6. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the patient information includes at least one of a claim number, first name, last name, social security number, and date of birth.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein sending the cover letter comprises faxing the cover letter to the processing center.

9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 8 further comprising automatically reading and identifying, by the processing center, the machine readable, bar code identifier on the cover letter.

10. (Previously presented) The system according claim 2, wherein the requestor comprises an insurance company.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein sending the cover letter comprises faxing the cover letter to the processing center.

15. (Previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein sending the cover letter comprises mailing the cover letter to the processing center.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said cover letter is a paper letter.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said patient authorization letter is a paper letter.

23. (Previously presented) The system of claim 2, wherein said cover letter is a paper letter.

24. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, wherein said patient authorization letter is a paper letter.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) A method of obtaining a patient record containing information concerning an identified patient from a record processing center using an electronic information web site associated with an electronic information server computer system, comprising:

accessing the electronic information web site by the requestor using an accessing computer client;

selecting by the requestor via the accessed electronic information web site the patient record concerning the identified patient, a record custodian holding the patient record and a shipping location to which the patient record is to be delivered, which together form an order;

downloading by the requestor from the accessed electronic information web a cover letter having a machine readable, bar code identifier and human readable information identifying the order;

storing the order selected by the requestor via the accessed electronic information web site in the electronic information server computer system;

providing to the requestor, by the identified patient, a patient authorization letter authorizing release of the patient record concerning the identified patient;

submitting from the requestor to the electronic information server computer system an electronic file containing the cover letter along with the patient authorization letter;

identifying the order in the electronic information server computer system using a software process executable on the electronic information server computer system capable of reading the machine readable, bar code identifier the cover letter;

transmitting a request from the electronic information server computer system to the record custodian to ship the patient record to the shipping location; and
receiving by the requestor the patient record at the shipping location.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 27, wherein submitting comprises faxing the cover letter along with the patient authorization letter to a fax receiving terminal in electronic communication with the electronic information server computer system.

30. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 27, wherein submitting comprises mailing the cover letter along with the patient authorization letter to the record processing center where they are scanned into the electronic information server computer system.